

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Extension Service
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SUGGESTED CONTENT FOR A 4-H LEADER TRAINING PROGRAM*

The 178,512 local voluntary 4-H leaders who serve the 75,146 clubs of our Nation are the most important single influence in the 4-H program. These suggestions on leader training are offered for the purpose of making their efforts as effective as possible.

Most of these ideas have been practiced and found to be feasible in one or more States. It is felt that 4-H leaders need the information or talents listed on these pages but the choice of training features for a particular State or county should be based on the situations and needs of the leaders there.

I. The 10 National 4-H Guideposts:

To help prepare tomorrow's citizens, physically, mentally, and spiritually, 4-H Club work provides opportunities for voluntary participation in programs, built on needs and interests, through which youth are:

1. Developing talents for greater usefulness.
2. Joining with friends for work, fun, and fellowship.
3. Learning to live in a changing world.
4. Choosing a way to earn a living.
5. Producing food and fiber for home and market.
6. Creating better homes for better living.
7. Conserving nature's resources for security and happiness.
8. Building health for a strong America.
9. Sharing responsibilities for community improvement.
10. Serving as citizens in maintaining world peace.

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II. Purposes of 4-H Club Work

State 4-H Club leaders, at a national conference, suggested that the purposes of 4-H Club work are to help rural youth to:

1. Develop desirable ideals and standards for (a) farming, (b) home-making, (c) family life, (d) community life, (e) citizenship, (f) leadership, and (g) personal living, and also a sense of responsibility for the attainment of these and all the following objectives.
2. Acquire skill in (a) farming, (b) homemaking, (c) community leadership; and also develop a clearer vision of agriculture as a basic industry and homemaking as a worthy occupation.
3. Conduct farm, home, and community projects or enterprises.
4. Develop an intelligent understanding and appreciation of nature, and also the conservation of natural and human resources.
5. Develop a scientific attitude toward the problems of the farm, the home, and the community.
6. Obtain training in cooperative action as a means of increasing personal accomplishments and of solving community problems.
7. Develop desirable habits related to (a) healthful living, (b) intelligent use of leisure time, and (c) a rich, more abundant living.
8. Increase incomes, standards of living, and the satisfactions of rural life.

III. The Needs of Young People.

In order to work effectively with youth a leader should be acquainted with some of their basic needs. A balanced training program for local leaders should provide opportunity to discuss and understand these needs.

A. Psychological

1. Security--need to belong, to have a part in things that go on about them.
2. Affection--the love of family and of friends.
3. Recognition--importance of a feeling of being wanted and needed.
4. New experiences--opportunities for wholesome adventure and for personal expansion.

B. Spiritual

1. A sense of moral and religious values.
2. An appreciation of the dignity of work.
3. A cooperative attitude.
4. A balanced personality.

C. Educational

1. Vocational--information on agriculture, home economics, and other vocations.
2. Self-improvement--training in social behavior, personality, poise and self-reliance, aids to becoming socially acceptable.
3. Leadership experience--youth can help lead younger boys and girls. They gain valuable experience in the process.

D. Recreation and social.

1. A wholesome outlet for energies.
2. A constructive substitute for delinquent tendencies.
3. A sound device for personality development.

IV. The Duties of a Local 4-H Club Leader

As listed by groups of 4-H leaders in different States, the following are specific jobs or duties most frequently reported. Leaders should be given help in the techniques of performing them.

A. Organization

1. Help with the organization or reorganization of the club.
2. Attend local club meetings and see that they are conducted satisfactorily.
3. Enroll new members.
4. Keep the membership active and the community enthusiastic about 4-H Club work.
5. Explain the aims and purposes of 4-H work.
6. Distribute responsibilities and obtain the help of all members, officers, parents, and other leaders.
7. See that transportation is arranged for local and other events.
8. Instruct club officers and see that they carry out their duties properly.

9. Serve as the connecting link between the 4-H Club and the county extension office.

10. Attend leader-training meetings.

B. Program planning.

Definite plans made early in the year are the first essential of a good 4-H program. Such plans should include not only the projects to be carried and programs for meetings, but also all special activities and outside events in which the club is to take part.

The best programs are developed by leaders and members and their parents all working together. In an exceptionally large club the program may be placed in the hands of a representative committee to report back to the club. Whatever method is used, the program should be written and a copy provided for each member.

In drawing up the program some points to consider are:

1. Strengths and weaknesses of the previous year's programs.
2. Should be based on the wants and needs of the members.
3. Have definite acceptance of responsibilities.
4. Determine project or projects.
5. Mobilize and utilize the help of others.
6. Appointment of committees.
7. Decide on methods of increasing membership.
8. Decide on programs for meetings:
 - a. Place of meetings.
 - b. When and how often.
 - c. Type of roll call to be given.
 - d. Topics to be discussed and by whom.
 - e. Demonstrations to be given.
 - f. Business meeting.
 - g. Recreation.
 - h. Refreshments.
 - i. Publicity.
 - j. Special features and election of officers.

C. Subject-matter teaching.

1. Demonstration method.

a. 4-H members show how.

(1) At leaders' meetings.

Have one or more individual and team demonstrations given by 4-H boys and girls. These demonstrators should be aware that their demonstrations will be discussed. Local leaders present should judge the demonstrations, using the regulation score card. After all demonstrations are given have a discussion of them led by the agent or a local leader. All should participate in discussion.

(2) At county demonstration days.

Encourage leaders and potential leaders to attend county and State demonstration days. Have leaders take their club members who don't participate as well as those who do.

b. Develop visual aids.

Developing sets of slides showing steps of good demonstrations. These may be discussed with leaders at leaders' meeting.

c. 4-H literature

Have a State demonstration bulletin which outlines the purpose and nature of giving 4-H demonstrations. This bulletin should be in the hands of all 4-H leaders and prospective leaders with explanation.

d. Leaders plan together.

At a leaders' meeting have leaders plan several demonstrations together. This will give them help in showing their club members how to plan 4-H demonstrations.

2. Judging activities

a. At leaders' meetings.

County club agents or specialists hold practice judging meeting with leaders. At these meetings the local leaders will do the judging. For example: Dairy leaders might have a practice dress review judging. This would show them what the judges look for and increase their understanding of 4-H standards and goals.

b. Illustrative material.

Subject-matter charts would be helpful to leaders to use in teaching club members judging. For example: In the dairy project pictures of animals typical of different breeds would be helpful. Pictures can also be helpful to illustrate the main points looked for in dairy judging.

c. Exhibit material.

Exhibit material with explanations for use in project judging activities. For example: A dress made by 4-H standards might be sent around to clothing clubs. These clubs can have practice judging. Explanations might accompany dress so members could check to see if they are judging according to 4-H standards.

d. Score cards.

At fairs and local and county exhibits score cards should accompany each exhibit to cover the main points in judging 4-H products. Judges should indicate how the exhibit should be improved. Local leaders should be encouraged to have a local club meeting about the score cards after the exhibits are rated. In this way club members will gain a better understanding of how things are judged and how they can improve their exhibits.

e. 4-H literature

In 4-H project literature, thought questions may be put in for each thing made. This could be part of a judging activity.

For example: In a clothing club if the girls have finished an apron, the literature might give questions on how to judge an apron. Judging the apron would become an activity in that meeting.

3. Sources of subject matter--help for local leaders.

- a. County club agents.
- b. Other extension agents.
- c. School teachers and other professional people.
- d. People in the community or county particularly interested in the subject matter taken by the local 4-H Club. For example: In a dairy club the club leader might get a farmer particularly good in dairy judging to teach one or more dairy judging schools.
- e. Bulletins, pictures, books, and magazines.
- f. Visual aids.

4. Help for leaders with more than one project.

- a. Have junior leader take charge of one project.
- b. Have an adult assistant leader to take charge of one project.
- c. Project advisers. Have one adviser for each 4-H Club member with project work.
- d. Other people in the community particularly talented in subject matter.

D. Utilizing incentives and recognition for members.

Many recognitions and awards are provided in the 4-H Club program as incentives in club work.

It is important that awards be evaluated and used only when they do stimulate "honest effort" toward achieving the recognized and accepted 4-H Club objectives. Contests, therefore, are the means to an end. To win a contest is not the end in itself.

The following is a list of incentives and devices used for the motivation of 4-H Club members:

1. Membership in a nationally recognized organization.
2. Commendation of parents, leaders, and agents.
3. Recognition from fellow members, such as election to club offices or to honorary or selective organizations.
4. Achievement awards, usually a pin or a certificate, for successful completion of 4-H projects.
5. Ribbons, certificates, banners, cups, and other symbolic awards to winners at local, county, State, and national events.
6. Merchandise awards to winners at local, county, State, and national events.
7. Money awards to winners at local, county, State, and national events.

8. Trips to camps, fairs, and other points of interest.
9. Scholarships for advanced education.
10. Public recognition at meetings, in circulars, in newspapers, and over the radio.

In using awards 4-H leaders should:

1. Know awards available and recommended for the club members in a given community, county, or State.
2. Advise club members early regarding available awards.
3. When awards are made follow with adequate publicity to stimulate interest of other club members.
4. Have awards commensurate with the importance of the achievement.
5. Realize that certain symbolic awards may be just as meaningful as something of greater intrinsic value.
6. Group placings are better than the conventional (1-2-3-4) system of judging.

E. Maintaining relationships.

A 4-H Club should meet a social and educational need and function as a harmonious working unit.

The local leader should encourage the club to consider the activities and interests of other groups in the development of its program.

1. Relationships within the group.

The local 4-H Club should be a demonstration of democracy at work. Responsibilities must be well divided. Each member should have some elective office or committee assignment in keeping with his or her abilities.

2. Relationships with other youth groups.

There are other worthwhile youth organizations in most communities and counties.

Relationships can be strengthened by recognizing the programs of other groups and working in cooperation with them. Look for activities that can be done together. Hold occasional inter-group meetings and formulate functioning intergroup committees.

3. Relationships with adult organizations.

All religious, civic, and similar organizations should be aware of the 4-H Club and its program in the community.

Special effort should be made to keep sponsoring organizations informed regarding 4-H Club work.

Arrange periodically for the 4-H Club members to give a program before a meeting of parents or interested organizations. Invite adult representatives to attend the 4-H Club meeting. Be sure adults are advised of exhibits and other 4-H activities in which they may be interested.

4-H Club work is a part of the nation-wide system of cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics. It is sponsored jointly by the United States Department of Agriculture, the State land-grant colleges, and county governing bodies. Civic, private, and commercial groups also help to make it possible in many places. Members and leaders of clubs should be informed of this relationship.

V. Suggestions to Supervisors on Methods for Training Leaders.

State leaders and county extension agents have employed many successful techniques for training leaders and keeping them informed. A few of the more popular methods are listed here, but for best results use ingenuity and the local situation to plan and guide your own training program.

1. Leader training meetings and institutes -- a series of about four per year should be a minimum. These may be held all day or in the evening. At least one should feature a special party or recognition for leaders. Both organization and program problems should be featured. There may be some advantage in forming a 4-H leader council for democratic action and effect.
2. Leader letters or news letters-- information should be timely, readable, and in readily usable form. Such letters are especially useful for announcements and project information. Short frequent letters are better than long ones.
3. Precept and example at club meetings -- when the agent attends a 4-H meeting he sets an example for the leader to follow later. The agent should never monopolize the meeting. Help the leader to help himself.
4. The demonstration method -- stage a model meeting as the basis for a leaders' discussion. Also demonstrate specific practices you expect the leader to teach or use.
5. Channel all information through the leader -- make him feel that he or she is the local representative of the county, State, and Federal Extension Service.
6. Visit the leader's home when in that area. You may happen to be there at a very critical time for on-the-spot aid.
7. Office visits -- the average local leader gives many hours of time to club work. A few extra minutes spent with him when he wants and needs it most may make that time more productive.
8. Notebooks and leaders' guides -- these should be to the point and contain only currently used materials, such as project circulars, rituals, and recreation.
9. Services and supplies -- be sure that all leaders, new and old, are fully informed about the available aids and are given any needed help in procuring them.

10. Literature and tools --- be alert to furnish or call attention to periodicals, commercial literature, or methods used by other leaders. Our own National 4-H Club News contains countless helps for local leaders. Work out a plan so that every leader may receive a copy each month.
11. Develop junior or assistant leaders. It is good training and experience for them and helps insure a continuity in the leadership for the club.
12. Provide training in the basic essentials. It is a too frequent error to overestimate the amount of information that a person has on a particular subject.
13. Support the local leader by adequate publicity and assistance on the county and State level.
14. Always have a few ideas or "tricks up your sleeve" for the club leader when you meet. It's a positive and helpful reminder of the importance and value of your mutual job.
15. Give leaders training in how as well as what to teach.

VI. Satisfactions and Values of Local Leadership to the Leader.

LEADERS' PREFERRED

The boss says "Go";
The leader says "Let's go."
The boss knows how it is done;
The leader shows how.
The boss says "I";
The leader says "We."

By A. B. Graham
U.S.D.A., retired.

A. "You must believe in something, in yourself, in the country, in God. You must have courage to back that belief with your money and your life, and patience to wait for fulfillment."

Leaders have the great privilege of experiencing things that they might otherwise never have the opportunity to enjoy. "They often take away more than they fetch." Personal gain and the satisfaction of helping others are the benefits mentioned most often by leaders as rewards from leadership work. "That which you do for yourself dies with you; but that which you do for others lives long after you are gone."

B. Satisfactions of 4-H leadership.

1. Service to boys and girls.
2. Opportunity to meet people.
3. Opportunity for personal growth.
4. Service to community, county, and State.
5. Public recognition and other expressions of appreciation.
6. Opportunity to attend events.
7. Inner satisfaction.

8. A part in training future leaders.
9. An educational and teaching adventure.
10. A challenge and a motivation.
11. Widened social contacts.

C. Recognition

1. State

The following 4-H leadership recognition is suggested as a very effective reward for service in leading 4-H Clubs:

A certificate and a specially designed pin constitute the 4-H leadership recognition award. (Certificates are provided gratis by the United States Department of Agriculture. Pins may be procured from the National Committee on Boys and Girls Club Work, Inc.)

- (a) The Award of the Silver Clover (5 years' service).
- (b) The 4-H Award of the Gold Clover (10 years' service).
- (c) The 4-H Award of the Pearl Clover (15 years' service).
- (d) The 4-H Award of the Diamond Clover (20 years' service).
- (e) The 4-H Award of the Emerald Clover (25 years' service).

2. County.

- (a) Leader banquet, dinner, or party.
- (b) Opportunities provided to attend county and State camps, and other meetings.
- (c) Newspaper publicity for faithful leadership or club contributions.
- (d) County leadership pins.
- (e) A "pat on the back" - and often.
- (f) Response and appreciation of members and parents.
Given opportunity to participate in county planning.
Recognition by the adult organization in which leader may be a member.

All leaders respond to genuine commendation. It should be used. Perhaps the best commendation speech consists of the two words: "Well done."